ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Prepositions Test Exercises – Multiple Choice Questions With Answers – Advanced Level 16

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1	**E**	2	**D**	3	**E**	4	**C**	5	**A**	6	**E**	7	**B**	8	**C**	9	**A**	10	**A**
11	**C**	12	**B**	13	**B**	14	**A**	15	**A**	16	**A**	17	**E**	18	**B**	19	**E**	20	**B**
21	**B**	22	**E**	23	**C**	24	**A**	25	**C**	26	**B**	27	**D**	28	**B**	29	**B**	30	**D**

Explanations

1. To see what happened, he started to walk _____ the place where the sound had come from.
✔ **E) towards**
Towards means 'in the direction of'. He walked in the direction of the sound. Not **across**, which means from one side to the other of a surface, such as **across the road**.

2. Escaping from its cage, my little bird flew _____ the open window.
✔ **D) through**
We use **through** for passing from one side of an opening to the other: **through the window**, **through the door**. Not **out to**: we say **out of the window**, not **out to the window**.

3. A child was trying to climb _____ the tree to see what was _____ the nest.
✔ **E) up / inside**
We **climb up** a tree, moving upwards. Things are **inside** (or **in**) a nest, because a nest is a container. Not **into / _____**: **what was the nest** needs a preposition.

4. She behaves towards the child from the orphanage _____ a real mother.
✔ **C) like**
Like + noun means 'in the same way as': she is not his mother, but she acts like one. Not **as**: **as a real mother** would mean she really is his mother (her role). **As if** needs a clause after it, e.g. **as if she were his mother**.

5. Can we travel from Istanbul to Edirne _____ road?
✔ **A) by**
We use **by** + a means of transport with no article: **by road**, **by train**, **by air**. Not **on**: we say **on the road**, with **the**, but **by road** for a way of travelling.

6. Yesterday, the thieves broke _____ my house and stole my watch and money.
✔ **E) into**
Break into a building means to enter it by force in order to steal. Example: **Someone broke into our car last night.** Not **inside**: the phrasal verb is always **break into**.

7. You are _____ the wrong floor; this is the fifth floor. You should walk _____ to the fourth floor.
✔ **B) on / down**
We say **on** a floor of a building: **on the fifth floor**. The fourth floor is lower than the fifth, so you walk **down**. Not **at / up**: up would take you to the sixth floor.

8. The panel discussion has just ended, so those people must be coming _____ the conference hall.
✔ **C) out of**
Out of shows movement from inside a place to the outside. The discussion has ended, so people are leaving the hall. Not **towards**: people go towards a hall before an event, not after it ends.

9. You should finish school with good grades _____ the sake of your future.
✔ **A) for**
For the sake of something means 'for the good of' or 'in order to help' it. Example: **He stopped smoking for the sake of his health.** The phrase always starts with **for**.

10. The man _____ his hands in his pockets is staring _____ you.
✔ **A) with / at**
With describes what someone has or how they look: **the man with his hands in his pockets**. The verb **stare** takes **at**: **stare at someone**. Not **on / to**: we never say **stare to**.

11. You can learn best _____ listening to your teacher _____ school.
✔ **C) by / at**
By + -ing shows the method of doing something: **learn by listening**. **At school** means at the place where you study. Not **through / for**: **through** can show a method with a noun, but not with **for school**.

12. Those were the days when no summer was complete _____ an excursion _____ the countryside to pick wild blackberries or strawberries or beach plums.
✔ **B) without / into**
Complete without something means it was not complete unless that thing happened. An **excursion into the countryside** is a trip that goes out into the country. Not **with**: 'no summer was complete with' gives the opposite meaning.

13. I have no fear; I can say all the things that I said yesterday _____ his face.
✔ **B) to**
The idiom **say something to someone's face** means to say it directly to the person, openly and not behind their back. Example: **If you don't like it, tell me to my face.** Not **at**: **at his face** is not used in this idiom.

14. People _____ an advanced level of English should understand what I said _____ my speech.
✔ **A) with / in**
With means 'having': **people with an advanced level of English**. We use **in** for the content of a speech, letter or book: **what I said in my speech**. Not **in / on**: we don't say **people in an advanced level**.

15. After he went _____ the house, he came _____ to the garden.
✔ **A) into / out**
Go into means to enter a place. **Come out to** a place means to leave a building and go to that place. Not **into / out of**: **out of to the garden** is wrong, because **out of** must be followed directly by the place you leave.

16. There is a doctor three blocks _____ Lester's home and a private clinic a mile _____.
✔ **A) from / away**
We show distance with **distance + from + place**: **three blocks from Lester's home**. Or we use **distance + away** with no place after it: **a mile away**. Not **near / long**: we don't say **three blocks near**.

17. Louis received a call _____ his mother _____ Connecticut, where he was to fly the next day _____ visit her.
✔ **E) from / in / to**
A call comes **from** a person: **a call from his mother**. **In** gives the place where she lives: **in Connecticut**. **To** + infinitive shows purpose: **to visit her**. Not **by / from / for**: **for visit her** is wrong, because purpose needs **to** + verb.

18. "The high cost _____ living is really getting me down," growled one fellow.
✔ **B) of**
The fixed expression is **the cost of living**, meaning the money needed for basic things like food and rent. Example: **The cost of living has risen sharply.** No other preposition is used in this phrase.

19. _____ living in Nairobi _____ several years, I returned to the States and headed _____ Kansas to visit old friends.
✔ **E) After / for / for**
After + -ing means 'after doing something'. **For** + a period of time gives duration: **for several years**. **Head for** a place means to go in its direction. Not **since**: **since** needs a starting point, e.g. **since 2010**, not a length of time.

20. He said he would wait for me _____ the beach _____ sunset.
✔ **B) on / at**
We say **on the beach**, on its surface, or **at the beach**. We use **at** with particular times of the day: **at sunset**, **at noon**, **at midnight**. Not **in / before**: we never say **in the beach**.

21. The customers' loss _____ confidence _____ the company has become a serious problem.
✔ **B) of / in**
The noun **loss** takes **of**: **loss of confidence**, **loss of money**. **Confidence** takes **in** when it means trust: **confidence in someone or something**. Not **for / with**: these do not go with **loss** or **confidence**.

22. It took them three hours to get _____ home.
✔ **E) _____**
Home is used without a preposition after verbs of movement: **get home**, **go home**, **come home**. Not **to**: we don't say **get to home**.

23. Of course you can't see it. The village is _____ the hills.
✔ **C) behind**
You can't see the village because the hills block your view, so it is **behind** the hills. **Behind** means at the back of something, hidden by it. Not **below**: a village below the hills could still be seen.

24. They ran _____ the stairs _____ the roof to look _____ the things that they had used years ago.
✔ **A) up / to / for**
You run **up** the stairs to a higher place and go **to** the roof, which is your destination. **Look for** means to try to find something. Not **up / on / up**: **look up** means to find information, for example in a dictionary.

25. The thief ran _____ the street and hid _____ the bushes.
✔ **C) across / behind**
Across means from one side to the other: **ran across the street**. **Behind** means at the back of something, so he was hidden by the bushes. Not **into / beside**: hiding **beside** the bushes would not hide him.

26. The cat ran and disappeared _____ the trees in the woods.
✔ **B) among**
Among means 'in the middle of a group of things', here the many trees in the woods. The cat ran in among the trees, so it could no longer be seen: **disappeared among the trees**. Not **beside**: beside means 'next to' something, so the cat would still be visible.

27. _____ that time I heard a loud noise just _____ the house.
✔ **D) At / outside**
At that time refers to a particular moment. **Outside** means near a building but not in it: **just outside the house**. Not **During / out**: **out** cannot be used alone before **the house**; we need **outside** or **out of**.

28. She got this book _____ John as a gift _____ her birthday.
✔ **B) from / on**
We get something **from** a person. We use **on** with days and dates: **on her birthday**, **on Monday**. Not **from / at**: we don't say **at her birthday** for the day itself.

29. He is always free _____ weekends _____ summer.
✔ **B) on / in**
We say **on weekends** (American; British English also says **at weekends**). We use **in** with seasons: **in summer**, **in winter**. Not **at / on**: we never say **on summer**.

30. I say to tall people: please sit _____ the back so that everyone can see our play.
✔ **D) at**
We say **at the back** (or **at the front**) for a position in a room or a theatre. Not **behind**: **behind** needs a person or object after it, e.g. **behind the children**.